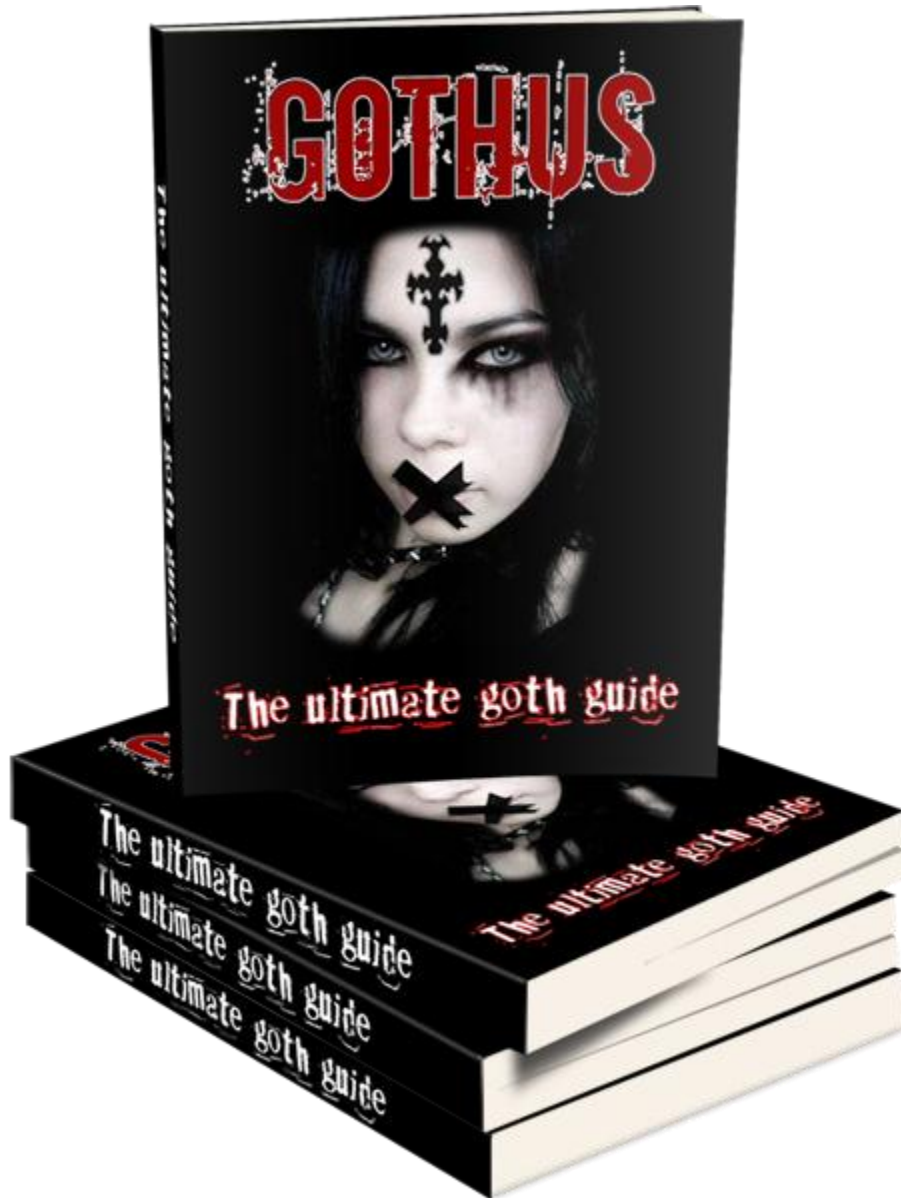


THE ultimate goth guide



The Ultimate Goth Guide

Everything you ever wanted to know on being or becoming a Goth!

Pages 3-6	Origins – Historical & Cultural Influences.
Pages 6-12	The Goth scene – Music, films, books, Clubs & Festivals.
Pages 13-15	Get your Goth name.
Pages 16-19	Goth sub culture -How to choose if any.
Pages 20-21	Ideology.
Pages 22-26	Goth Websites, Online communities.
Pages 27-30	Religious Influences.
Pages 31-33	Fashion – Do's & Don'ts.
Pages 34-38	Goth Slang Explained.
Pages 39-43	Parents - What you need to know about your Goth child.
Pages 43-48	Criticisms and Controversy.

Summary from website continues.

Origins & History

To fully understand what it is to be a Goth, you have to first understand where we come from – Our beginning.

Goths originally were from a Pagan Eastern German tribe, who helped bring down the Roman Empire. The Goth ideal that we now know and love began in the United Kingdom in the late 1700s. This is when the nostalgia for the medieval period led people to become fascinated with medieval gothic ruins.

This fascination was often combined with an interest in medieval romances, the Roman Catholic religion and the supernatural. Enthusiasts for gothic revival architecture in the United Kingdom were led by Horace Walpole, and were sometimes nicknamed "Goths" this was the first time that the word Goth was used as a positive term instead of its previous meaning of barbarian.

The more modern term "Gothic" came from a Gothic Novel written in the late eighteenth century by Horace Walpole. His book entitled "The Castle of Otranto" is believed to be responsible for the creation of the term "Gothic". Walpole claimed that the book was a real medieval romance that he had discovered and republished. It was later discovered that his claim was untrue and the gothic novel's association (all novels), with false stories and documents was born, he had claimed this to increase its horror effects. After this the term "Gothic" was associated with a mood of horror, morbidity, darkness and the supernatural.

This gothic novel and others later on established much of the iconography of horror literature and cinema that was to come.

Graveyards, ruined castles or churches, ghosts, vampires, nightmares, being buried alive and melodramatic plots were all born from this.

The most memorable Gothic Villains were created, the most famous of these being Dracula. Bram Stoker wrote his novel with not only darkness and sordidness but also with intriguing, luring beauty buried beneath the layers of his villain and characters and the impossible love triangle. Stoker's Dracula was a dark brooding character, with buckets of sex appeal and danger; this was to become the foundations of being/becoming a Goth.

Further on down the literary trail, during the revolutionary war-era "American Gothic" was written. This was a story of the Headless Horseman, who was immortalized in Irving's novel, The Legend of Sleepy Hollow.

This book was published in 1820 along with another of Irving's novels, Rip Van Winkle. Another great writer that we must pay homage to is Anne Rice. Anne Rice's re-invention and re-imagining of the idea of the vampire created a whole new layer to what Stoker had already created. Rice's characters were depicted as struggling with eternity and loneliness; this with their ambivalent or tragic sexuality had deep attractions for many Goth readers, making her novels very popular in the 1980's and on to today. A must for any person who is a Goth in the making!!

Later, as the world moved on and cinema became an outlet and finder of more and more souls, Stoker's famous story was made for the silver screen. Countless versions have been made over the years and other film companies began to see the pull and money to be made by society's fascination with fear and horror.

The powerful images of horror movies began in a German expressionist cinema in the 1920's this then passed onto the Universal Studio films of the 1930's, then to camp horror B films such as Plan 9 from outer space and then to the great Hammer Horror films. By the 1960s, TV series were created; The Addams Family and The Munsters alike were used as stereotypes for camp comedy.

The Legend of Sleepy Hollow novel when adapted for the cinema was an action film made in 1980 and starred Jeff Goldblum. But this was not the film that many would remember in its reach for infamy.

Tim Burton who was already famous through his many films like Edward Scissor hands and Batman to name a few, took on The Legend of Sleepy Hollow and created a film even Irving would be proud of. Burton produced films with a unique blend of myth, magic and the macabre. He brought his full powers to bear on the story and created a storybook atmosphere that was filled with darkness and shadow. Burton's biggest triumph was to give equal weight to the stories of both Crane and the Horseman.

In Irving's original novel, the headless rider is an un-dead Hessian mercenary, but in the Burton version he uses a whole array of traditional gothic, horrific and medieval imagery to bring his version alive.

As you have probably guessed by now I am a BIG Burton fan and have loved all of his works, right from his early days with Edward Scissor hands to the Corpse Bride of late. We also cannot ever forget the adaptations of Anne Rice's stories which have also been made into movies.

These films based on her books have been screened in recent years. The most acclaimed being Interview with the Vampire in which a very sexy Brad Pitt and Tom Cruise featured. Queen of the Damned also was filmed and starred Aaliyah who tragically died after filming in a plane crash. As a final note on iconic Goth films I could not, will not, forget the fantastic, amazing and beautiful film, The Crow. This film starred Brandon Lee, another actor who died after (or it is rumoured during) filming! This film, well what can I say other than if you haven't seen it you haven't lived!

His performance rocked! And the wardrobe used in the film spread into the modern day dress of the Goth.

This brings us now to look at the 20th century and its musical influences. Here we can see that some elements in the dark, atmospheric music and dress of the post punk scene were becoming clearly gothic in the sense we now know. The use of Gothic as an adjective in describing this music and its followers led to the term Goth.

The influence of the Gothic novel on the Goth subculture was more than anyone could have predicted. It can be seen in numerous examples of the subculture's poetry and music. Some people credit the band Bauhaus' first single "Bela Lugosi's Dead", released in August 1979, with the start of the Goth subculture. Early examples of Goth bands include Siouxsie and the Banshees, The Damned, The Cure, Southern Death Cult, UK Decay, Joy Division and 45 Grave just to name a few.

Some of the more early Gothic rock and death rock artists adopted the traditional horror movie images, and also drew on horror movie soundtracks for inspiration in their music. Their fans responded by adopting the dress and props that we have all come to know and love. These have evolved though in many ways but there are still some true Goths who still swear by the "good old days"!

Using horror film props like swirling smoke, rubber bats, and cobwebs were used as Gothic club décor and still are to this day. These props used by the bands in their music and image were originally done as a joke, it was done very tongue in cheek some might say, but as time went on, bands and members of the Gothic subculture decided to adopt the look and make it their own, a type of signature.

As a result, morbid, supernatural, and occult themes became a noticeable and serious element within this subculture. The connection between horror and Goth was becoming highlighted in its early days by The Hunger, a 1983 vampire film, which starred David Bowie and Catherine Deneuve. This epic and iconic movie featured THE Gothic rock group of the time, Bauhaus, who performed their song "Bela Lugosi's Dead" in the nightclub. Ten years later in 1993, Whitby became the location for what became the UK's biggest Goth festival. This was due to Bram Stoker's Dracula being remade again for the cinema and Whitby was featured heavily in it.

The Goth Scene

Today's Goth scene is currently at its greatest peak in decades. The choices of music, clothes, art, books and movies are greater and more available within today's society; also the acceptance of "be who you want to be" is no longer a taboo.

There are so many different elements to the UK Goth scene. Much of the scene is better classed as alternative rather than Gothic as there are so many sub types to choose from now. You will find a lot of Goth clubs don't play much of what is classed as traditional Goth music anymore as in today's culture not much is made. You may find the occasional Siouxsie or Sisters of Mercy tracks being played though!

Many Goths believe that Black Metal, Industrial, EBM and Synth Pop are Goth and the majority of UK clubs cater for this, it is as always up to the individual. However I have noticed recently that many new clubs dedicated to traditional Gothic, Post Punk and Death Rock have started to sprout up all over the UK. The best known is probably "Dead and Buried" which is in London and there are others, like the Black Veil in Leeds, The Hex in Wolverhampton and The Wake in Nottingham.

Music plays a large part within Goth culture and with today's wide range of styles there are many different groups and artists to choose from. After darkness right through to Wench, all different styles and all from a different walk of life. Bauhaus for example, is for many Goths the beginning and in some people's eyes the end. Bauhaus' music, although not the earliest music that can be called 'Gothic', it is definitely the foundation for all Goth music.

The "Bela Lugosi's Dead" single is the song that defines Goth. Bauhaus albums are angry and dark their songs are crafted meticulously and the lyrics are amazing explorations of decay, emptiness, and fear. Behind them they showed a great sense of humour about the cult that they were in the process of creating, and even as they descended into the

morbid and hateful, they always took a moment to laugh at their own pretences and at the assumptions that their fans were making about them. The laugh was bitter, but it gave Bauhaus a sense of perspective that is missing in many of the imitations that spawned from them. The music itself is difficult to describe.

It's guitar-driven with liberal doses of feedback and random changes in direction; Peter Murphy's vocals swing from tortured howls to deep and resonant chants (of course, Daniel Ash and David J. supplied vocals for many of the songs too, particularly on *Burning From The Inside*).

Their records are a lot more elegant and have much more depth than singles like "Bela" or "She's in Parties" would suggest -- as great as those songs are, it is generally a good idea to get hold of an album or two and decide for yourself if you haven't already, what Bauhaus is all about.

There is only one place to be scene and to go in the UK, an important date for your calendar not to be missed! This is the two Whitby Gothic Weekends which take place in April and October respectively and take place in Whitby, North Yorkshire. Whitby is famous for its Abbey and it is associated with the Dracula story. The festival is organized and run by Jo Hampshire.

The festival has been running since 1994. There are two venues, the main one is at the Spa, there are usually four to five bands playing on the Friday and again on the Saturday night. The bands can be quite diverse Industrial, Metal, Electronic, Punk and Goth. Most of the music played at the Spa is electronic and eighties pop and to be honest might not appeal to those who prefer traditional Gothic and Death Rock. There is an overspill event at the Metropol Hotel. This is a fantastic and interesting club night and can be variable in the music it plays.

There are other unofficial events which take place over the weekend and these are in the main catering more for the Traditional Gothic element and take place at various public houses around the town such as the Resolution on Flowergate (Gothic/Death

Rock DJ's and bands as well.) There is also the Sexy Sunday nights (For us girls to show off!!), at the Metropol on Sunday and Monday. It gets really packed and the music is a mixture of everything you could possibly want. I definitely, highly recommend Whitby to anybody who wants to experience the wonderful historic Town and also a highly enjoyable weekend. Everybody is friendly and I do guarantee that you would love it!!

So let's discuss all the latest books, music and movies just to keep you always in the game!! Even though we come across as dark and moody sometimes, well people see us that way!!! We still love to shop just like anyone else, go to movies and hang out with our friends. I know my friends and I love going to the movies and talking about the latest gothic novel one of us has found! And more importantly the latest hotties to grace our musical screens via Kerrang!!

Well, the current music scene is varied and in some parts debateable. Take Marilyn Manson for example there is a lot of controversy surrounding him. He dresses Goth, his make-up is Goth, and everything visible is Goth. But in his heart some may argue he is not. What he has done was for shock value; he has exploited a generation and made them into "spooky kids".

They follow him to show rebellion against society, their parents? Who knows? But his music although dark and at times just ranting rock, he shows how far away he really is from real Goth bands who's music is mysterious in its desolation. Bauhaus could teach him a thing or two!!! Us Goths that are first and second generation look down on the young ones who are into bands like this, because we are aware that this new generation is not staying true. But like all cultures, religions and ways of life we have to accept some changes and adapt our ways so that we can move on and evolve. Goth culture has in the last twenty years has evolved enough that it exists as the longest standing youth sub type culture in history to date!!!

So we have something to be very proud of.

Another note on music, there is usually a Gothic Festival every year in different places all over the world. This year 2008, it was held in Waregem which is in Belgium. The headliners were of course Fields Of The Nephilim along with Fixmer/McCarthy, 32 Crash, Empusae and the Cruxshadows among many! What a line up! I bet it was an experience some will never forget!

When it comes to books it can be hard to say what kinds of books we like as we are all different in our inclinations and views. Some Goths read about religion and history, others politics and philosophy. We have all read the classics;

Dostoyevsky - Notes from the Underground, Dante - The Inferno, Orwell – 1984, Bram Stoker – Dracula, Mary Shelley's Frankenstein and anything written by Byron and Edgar Allen Poe.

Today's Goth books come in many different forms and styles. Everything from fantasy novels, Vampire/Vampyre novels, horror novels and even Sci-fi novels are considered acceptable reading for Goth's. This shows how far we are beginning to evolve and adapt, accepting that the lines between the sub cultures are beginning to fade and that we are becoming a whole unity under the same ideal. Some of the more popular books in these genres are;

Poppy Z. Brite has written some interesting novels of which my favourite is the fantastic novel Lost Souls, H.P. Lovecraft, Ray Bradbury who is a sci-fi horror and fantasy writer and of course anything by Anne Rice. Her novels, especially the Vampire Chronicles, which include Interview with the Vampire, The Vampire Lestat, Queen of the Damned and The Tale of the Body Thief to name but a few, will always be popular.

Another form that is growing from strength to strength is magazines. It is about time that the media recognised that we too like to read about all the "normal" stuff but just in a way that is tailored to us. So give these magazines a quick read or an in depth read if you have the time and you will see and enjoy the goods on offer;

Permission, Ghastly, Blue Blood, Industrial Nation, Carpe Noctem and Propaganda.

Comic books are another form of reading that is on the up and up in fact a friend of mine swears by them and I can see that the art work is out of this world!

The stories are a little bland for my taste but are definitely worth a read. If you do decided to venture out and buy yourself a comic or two to give them a go then it is recommended you try;

Sandman comic books – try and read the copy called Death: the High Cost of Living.

Johnny the Homicidal Maniac and Squee these are both written by Jhonen Vasquez and of course the legendary, The Crow comics from which the film was spawned from.

Now if you take a look at your local cinema listings Goth films are making a come back!! Gone are the days of B types films and not headliners, today's Gothic films are headliners. With Goth films making a leap into the mainstream as such, they are now more world wide smash hits, in a way bringing Goth to the people! More and more people are watching these films and taking an interest, with interest comes like and with like comes acceptance.

Big Hollywood movies like Underworld, Van Helsing, Blade, Matrix and the films made from Ann Rice's books – Interview with the vampire and Queen of the Damned just to name a small few, have changed the way the world perceives us as a culture and brought the world of Goth into the bright lights in every town, city and front room all over the world!

Now for all you kindergoths out there, there is some essential gothic movies you should take a look at that will show you are history, as someone famous once said, before you can understand where you are and why, you must understand where you have come from! Now a quick list of films for you to go down to your local DVD store and rent out!!;

Dracula 2000
The Forsaken 2002
Fright Night 1& 2
Night of the living dead, Return of the living dead
Nadja 1994
The Addiction 1995
John Badhams Dracula 1979
Dracula's Daughter 1936
The Monster Squad 1987
Salem's Lot 1979
From Dusk till Dawn 1996
The Crow

A lot of these are vampire films but unfortunately Hollywood has only seen fit to portray Goth as being this type for many years. It is only recently that the film industry has come along way and started to produce Goth films that portray us as we are!

Goth Names

We all have our names that were given to us by our parents and on our Birth Certificates. But in our world you are given the opportunity to choose your own name. My birth name is Gemma but my chosen name or my Goth name as you would call it is Lilith Rose.

Sit down with a piece of paper and written down all of the names that come to mind that you either admire, take inspiration from your favourite music, band, book and/or film.

Now take the names you have written down and mix them about a bit. Be creative, maybe mix too names together to create a new name or put two names together that go! Mix and match, take inspiration from them and create your own unique name. Take inspiration from plant and tree names, months of the year, Angel's names as they were named back in a time when all of the culture was "gothic" in nature and everyone spoke Latin or the weather.

Here are a few examples for you to work with:

Female names

Winter-Grace

Autumn Rain

Wisteria

Lycia Moon Severna

Kithara

Teinikitia

Eva

Gabrielle

Auberry

Ezabel

Akaysha Sisera
Willow
Bella Tragedia
Morrigan
Winter Pietra
Alynnah
Tabitha
Elena Roselyn Bell
Lucia
Anastasia
Lilith

Male names
Damien/Damian/Damieon
Kascien
Hayden/Haydon
Malaki
Lucas Dracus
Zander/Aleazander/Xander
Ragnor
Hades
Quentin
Barnabas
Joshua
Varney
Vincent
Alistair
Nivek
Cevin
Constantine
Balthazar

Octavian

Korvin

Tiernan

Draven

Caedmon

Garrick

When it comes to name meanings it all doesn't have to be doom and gloom or dark. Some sites on the web will give you an extensive amount of meanings for your chosen name. Also if you input "Goth names" into any search engine on the web, it will give you a never ending list of web sites that will, after inputting a few details, give you your Goth name. But I suggest you only try this if you end up not having any luck yourself in finding a name.

Goth Sub Culture – How to choose which one you belong to, if any.

As with all walks of life, Goth, Christian, Wiccan, Pagan, Voodoo, Islam, Hindu etc there are always sub cultures or branches of, within each group. Goth is no different than any of them. From the original ideal of what it is to be a Goth there has spawned many different ideas and those ideas in time have formed sub cultures. What has also spawned from this is Goth slang but we will cover this later on in another chapter.

Firstly like any other culture we need to understand what societies idea/stereotype is before we can understand and see the difference when discussing the sub cultures. When we think of a stereo type we see what only society dictates for us to see. Society dictates that a Goth is a person who wears black; this is in their hair colour, nails, and clothes and also their thoughts.

A stereotypical Goth is a person who is obsessed with death, angst and suicide. They think, behave and dress like daemons/vampires of the night. We are supposed to be all about blood, coffins, bats and all things that are gloomy. They are vain and as never seen without their makeup on and are often seen for hours in clubs touching up and adjusting the way they look. They smoke only cigarettes made from cloves and hang around cemeteries. Some may also write very bad music lyrics or poems about death, blood and vampirism.

Oh yes and avoid sunlight at all costs!!! As you can quite clearly see we are not all like that!!! Society is obsessed with labelling everything and to be a Goth is to be without a label!!! I personally have never met a fellow Goth that is anything like what the stereotype is meant to be. If anything the stereotype is something we make fun of and rebel against!

Even though the stereotype dictates that there is vampirism, there is some truth behind it, this is because a sub culture has formed around this. After Anne Rice's amazing books and the film genre that followed, it helped form a sub culture.

This sub culture is split in some ways into two parts. Ones that believe that they are vampyres and others that just wish to portray vampire qualities. Vampyres (the spelling is different), believe truly in themselves that they are Vampires or that they are Vampires stuck in human form.

The spelling Vampyre is preferred by some so as to distinguish them away from the fictional characters that portray what a vampire is. But there are also those who consider this spelling to be pretentious and believe that the original spelling Vampire is the correct way. Some Vampyres role play games and dress in capes and wear custom made fangs others go as far as having their incisors sharpened so that they look like fangs. Personally I would have custom made one's as this type of trip to the dentist sounds exceedingly painful and is definitely only for the hardcore!!

These games are well known on the scene as Vampyre: The Masquerade. The other thing some do is to drink the blood from a voluntary donor. The games that are played within this sub culture often incorporate their own ideas on mythology and religion; we will cover this in later chapters.

There is great disagreement between Vampyres and Vampires as to what a real Vampyre/Vampire is. Some of them only take in clubs or in games. Some only play the game for the fetish scenes that are mixed into the sub culture.

Others belong in groups often called clans. The games played are often unique to each clan. Players in the clans are called "the Kindred" as in kindred spirits, people who believe in the same thing.

There is of course clans who claim Vampirism is a genetic condition that causes them to hide away from the sun and desire and crave blood which they require for their survival.

Other clans believe that a true Vampyre can only be created by another via a blood ritual, others that the only way is to be born one.

These Vampyres within the clan believe they are not human and have been born this way. This could possibly be from human parents, but this is something I can not find enough information on to enlighten you on the ins and outs. They believe that they have achieved a form of immortality and that this non-human status makes them the highest in the chain of clans and their society. From a physiological point of view the reason some believe that they are not human is by the way that they are treated by others. Outsiders see them as weird and non-human so in turn this in fact makes them non-human. How you see this or interpret this point of view seen by some mainly scholars, is entirely up to you!

One thing that these clans have in common is blood; they are all in one way or another blood drinkers and all believe it is essential, but only from voluntary donors. There are some clans of course that believe that drinking blood is not essential and shun this part of Vampirism.

Then there are the clans who believe that they are psychic Vampyres. This is when they feed from people's energy and/or emotions. This is called gathering of "life force" which is done psychically. This supposedly drains their "Donor" and puts them to sleep. Eventually in time if this is done repeatedly on the same person too many times, he/she loses their "life force" or soul and dies. All sounds very horrible to me, but each to their own I say!

Another subculture that has sprung up more recently from Goth is EMO. EMO is short for emotional, it has come from the music scene that is not quite Goth enough to be Goth. It is another form of evolution. EMO's dress like us in a fashion, act like us but are more emotional when it comes to expressing who they are. They come across as having the weight of the world on their shoulders and are often at times suicidal, although this is not all of them. It also has been known for some to self harm because of this intense

emotional approach they have to life. It is not all bad though, some EMO's are very happy lovely people who are just very emotional.

The only way to define EMO music is that the music is overly emotional, some would say highly charged and is straight and to the point when expressing the emotion of that song. The music can be anything that has heavy punk chords and influences such as the Sex Pistols, but it can also have influences that are soft and melodic like some of the songs by the Cure. The EMO music scene has been influenced by the Cure and bands like Depeche Mode. Depeche Mode is primarily an electronic band, but their moody lyrics and loner style has influenced EMO culture. Recently though EMO music has begun to move away from the punk scene and is moving towards electronic sounds. Bands like Death Cab for Cutie is one of the best examples of this.

EMO music got its roots from punk rock and Goth music; it now has been infused with Indie rock. Such bands as the Cure and Sunny Day Real Estate and then bands like Fugazi and Texas Is the Reason have all influenced the EMO movement. Texas Is the Reason is an Indie band while Fugazi is certainly punk. Other bands like Suicidal Tendencies, Cat Power, Further Seems Forever, The Promise Ring, Benton Falls, and Army of Ponch.

It all comes down to lyrics with EMO's; lyrics that talk about despair and sadness are what EMO is about. The references in the lyrics to drying out from alcohol abuse or drug use, self harm and suicide are all what the music is about. EMO's are in general mainly teenagers and this may explain why they are so emotionally charged due to the hormones racing around. Teenagers find it hard to decide where they want to be and who they want to be. Their emotions can vary from angry to sad to happy, and EMO music is an expression of the experiences as teenagers as well as their progression into adulthood. Some EMO's move on to become full Goths others go to into the more mainstream cultures.

Ideology

The ideology of the gothic movement is complex and quite difficult to explain in parts. There are a few reasons for this, as it all depends on the importance of mood for the individual or group.

The first reason is that originally the movement was inspired by not only romanticism but the allure of dark, mysterious, and morbid things at the same time. Both of these things are something that would normally never be put together but in the Gothic movement they fitted together like two silk gloves.

The creation and hunger for the Gothic Romanticism novels in the 19th century showed a sudden mass connection between people for the entertainment involving horror. This was exploited by the writers and in time became our modern horror film. This shows how mood is important. The balance of this mood makes or breaks a book or a film.

The second reason is that Goth's sometimes have a political and theological nature. Some individuals show defiance of the social norms, and in the 19th century it was very risky to do this. In today's social culture it is more acceptable and not seen as being defiant.

Therefore a political rebellion never happened because Goths do not have in anyway a political agenda. We have shown our mark on society by emphasizing individualism, understanding and acceptance for diversity in all of its forms. We have given pride to those whom have shown creativity. Not every Goth is like this though and here lies the quandary of Goth Ideology.

Goth Ideology is based far more on aesthetics than it would ever be on ethics or politics.

Some Goths however do believe in politics and may lean Labour or Green party or anarchist and even conservative! But this is up to the individual and we respect and accept each other in every way.

The best way to explain this? Then let me ask you this; when was the last time you saw or read about Goths making a political stand? Never, because we as a culture don't believe in it as a whole was are as such pacifists when it comes to politics, we just want to be left alone to enjoy our world and keep them out of ours just as much as we want to keep out of theirs.

Goth Websites, Online communities and Online dating-the rules.

When you look on any search website and type in Goth, you will find an abundance of different sites available for your viewing pleasure, depending on what you are into. Below I have given a few website addresses that may interest you, this ranges from websites for kindergoths to websites for Elder Goths;

Goth.net

necroticobsession.com/gothname.html - For a bit of fun!

last.fm/tag/goth - Goth internet radio

gothicmatch.com - For personals

gothmetal.net - Goth internet radio alternative

wikihow.com/Be-Goth - More info on how to be a Goth

gothpunk.com/howtos/how-to-dance-gothic.html - Learn how to dance Goth style

daregothic.co.uk - A fantastic Goth clothing store online also try Ebay for bargains

www.vamp.org/Gothic/Text/gothlist.html - Music handbook

www.vampirefreaks.com/ - Vampire Goth community

www.dagonbytes.com/ - Gothic Art

quiz.myyearbook.com/myspace/PainGoreDeath/1634/vampiregoth_or_both.html - A bit of fun!

The list is endless! So I have chosen just a few for you to begin with and you can then expand your searches depending on your tastes and likes.

The internet is a fantastic place to meet other like minded Goths but always when looking at community sites there are rules to keep you safe same if you decide to join a Goth dating site, the same rules apply. So read on and remember to stick to the rules

and keep yourself safe. The main point is to enjoy yourself, meet new people, make new friends and possibly meet that special someone.

To begin with you need to be prepared before you start so here are some tips to start you off:

- **A picture says more than you think about you!**

Get some recent pictures of yourself together and upload them onto your computer. Profiles on dating sites with a picture get considerably more viewings by other like minded people than those without.

Do make sure they're recent pictures of you; otherwise you could be heading for disappointment if you meet up with someone.

Ideally it's best to have more than one picture. One should be of your face and the other a whole body shot.

- **Email address**

Once you get to know people on the site, you may want to exchange email addresses so you can chat more privately especially if you have taken a liking to them!

So set up a new email address specifically for this purpose that you give out only to new friends or significant new friends that you chat to online.

Don't give out your work email or primary email address because if anything goes wrong and you fall out the last thing you need is them hounding and/or abusing you.

- **Screen names**

This is the fun part! If you have already decided on your Goth name then use it, if not then read back on Goth Names (Page 17) and be creative!!!!

- **Instant Messenger**

Most people already have an Instant Messenger (IM) that they chat to their friends on already but your new friends may be with a different provider.

So it is best to set up a couple of IM accounts with different providers. Because if someone wants to talk to you and you don't use the same compatible IM program, you could end up wasting time struggling to set it up!

Sometimes software just doesn't install the way you want it to!

- **Writing a profile**

Before you even join the community/dating site it's best to decide exactly what you want to say about yourself. It doesn't have to be everything about you but it has to be your basic details at least.

- **Online Chat**

If you have a microphone or Webcam for your computer that you use for some IM programs then you can set up online chat that way. That way you can talk in real time without giving out your home or mobile number.

- **Update Your Profile Often**

Always update your profile every now and then, even if you are happy with what it says and there haven't been any major changes in your life. This is because some sites often show a record of when you last updated your profile and it will allow the other members who search most recently changed profiles to find you and have a look at who you are. So my advice is once a month change something in your profile, mix it about a bit or add something, it keeps things fresh.

Now we need to talk about safety. There are horror stories you've probably heard so keep these tips in mind and keep safe!

- **Go Slow**

Take things slowly to start with and build the trust between you and your new friends. Take it one step at a time. You can do this by emailing each other, swapping recent photos, and chatting via IM.

- **Stay anonymous to begin with**

As the trust between you builds, you can reveal more and more about yourself but do it slowly. Don't tell them your life story!!! Not just yet!!

- **Ask for a photo**

If they haven't already posted a photo then ask them for one. Don't forget to ask for more than one photo, and remember to ask when the photo was taken. Unfortunately not everyone is honest and you need to be aware of this!

- **Where to Meet**

Always arrange to meet somewhere public where there are a lot of people. Make sure you plan everything in advance and that you know your route home so you don't miss the last train or bus, and keep a number to call for a taxi in case you're late or there's been a change of plan.

- **Tell a friend**

Always tell someone where, when and with whom you are meeting. Always tell someone, no matter how silly you feel about it, you might be thankful for it one day!

- **Travelling long distance**

If the person or persons you are going to meet live quite far away then arrange to meet them half way. This way if anything goes wrong or you don't like the look of the

situation then you aren't too far away from home to call for help or get out of there and be home quick!!

So now you have the rules go off and have some well earned fun!! Join Facebook, gothpassions.com, topsocialsites.com, Bebo etc you'll have the time of your life but remember there is a real world out there! Don't get sucked into the world of the internet completely as meeting other Goths the "normal" way is just as, if not more fun!

Religious Influences

There is no common tie that all Goths worship as a religion in fact there are many different religions within Goth culture. The most commonly known but has become the stereotype is Satanism.

Not all Goths are devil worshipers some are even Christian, Wicca, and Pagan, in fact most religions will find that some of their worshipers are in fact Goths. When we look at religious imagery we can see it has played an important role in influencing the way we dress, the lyrics in our songs and the art some of us produce. In fact many of us have a love of Gargoyles.

Gargoyles originally are what were placed on the exterior of a church to ward off evil. Thinking along this line we can see that some of the aesthetic elements from the Catholic faith's imagery play a major role in our culture. The reasons for this are mainly for decorative effect it is believed.

When we were discussing Ideology we discovered that all Goths are independent and their own ideas at what a Goth is, is not wrong as there is no set standard at what a Goth is.

There is no rule book handed down from generation to generation because as a culture we adapt evolve that is why we survive, grow and flourish. The only thing we have that we share from generation to generation is the love of our history, the way we dress, act and our beloved music!!!

Now getting back to religion I will cover a few options for you. I will start with Satanism as it is the stereotype;

Many outsiders presume that all Goths are Devil worshipers and for the few that are there are three types or levels of Satanists. Firstly there are Proclaimed Satanists.

These people are members of satanic churches. The First Church of Satan was founded by Alistair Crowley but it is also believed that in the 1960's a man called Anton LaVey founded the Church of Satan. He did this by writing the first Satanic Bible.

Members of these Satanist groups are usually Kindergoths guided by Elder Goths. They are recruited either online or in pub/clubs. They make promises of a charmed life and for some who are of the Vampyre inclination they offer you eternal life and the chance to become a Vampyre because Satan will reward you for your loyalty.

The second type is known as theatrical Satanists. The kindergoths are what is classed as baby bats in a way, because they are wannabes. They have the name theatrical as they only act the part. They gain knowledge about the occult from commercial sources. This can be from the music they listen to, the movies they watch and T.V programs, sometimes books and even friends. They sometimes try and "practice" being Satanists but are incapable and make up rituals that accomplish very little. Most of them move on from this and grow out of it.

The third level is a step up from level two but not yet level one. They are called the experimental Satanists. These kindergoths are usually between 14 to 20 years old and have felt the need because they have experienced something during the theatrical stage. They now begin to read up on and study the occult more in-depth via training manuals, and possibly attended rituals by level one Satanists. It is now they begin to experiment and conduct rituals themselves. The rituals may be simple or complex in power it all depends on their knowledge that has been acquired through strong belief and effort.

Certain rituals call for blood and they may cut themselves to obtain this blood that they need for the rituals and ceremonies.

But it is not all like this. The above is real but is classed as what all Goths are like, which we know to be different. In contrast to the above I am now going to explain what a Christian Goth is. This is a total role reversal from the above and will help you see that there are many different types of religions where Goths do exist.

When you Google Christian Goth there are a huge amount of sites to explain what a Christian Goth is and communities you can join if you are a Christian Goth. To be honest I was quite surprised by this. After doing a lot of research I can now tell you what a Christian Goth is to the best of my knowledge;

God does not show favoritism, he does not favor any above another. God accepts everyone for who they are. This is the teachings of the church so does it therefore not show that they should accept anyone regardless as long as they worship the lord? This is the reason why you can be Goth but also Christian. Certain things yes are inappropriate like having a cross pendant upside down or a pentagram but it does not mean you have to stop wearing black, change your fashion sense, stop going to clubs and stop listening to your favorite band. But there are some problems that still need to be over come as well: Acceptance by others;

- Black lipstick does not look good on the chalice from which you receive the blood of Christ.
- Others may not accept you in the church and move their children away from you like you are some kind of disease that will spread into them.
- When the Vicar/Father preaches a sermon about heathens and Satanists, the evils of the world and everyone looks at you.
- Getting your fishnet tights/shirt caught on the pews

As you can see these are just a few things that Goth Christians have to put up with from people who are small minded. When you join a church it is best to go and visit the Vicar/Father/Pastor before attending a service at that particular Church, and having a one to one chat with him first.

God teaches all to be accepting and understanding and you will probably find that the first sermon you hear on your first Sunday is about this. This is to show all the other worshipers that he/she accepts you, God accepts you, and so they should try to do the same. It can be a slow and lengthy process but you will get there eventually as your faith in God will shine through and show them you are no different than them.

You just dress a little different. Or on the flip side you may find they are very accepting quite quickly and invitations to BBQ's and socials come thick and fast. They will want to ask many questions so that they understand Goth culture, be prepared for this.

They are not doing it to gain ammunition to "stone" you but are genuinely interested and with understanding also comes acceptance.

There are plenty of Christian Goth sites on the web, community sites and advice. There are even dating sites but do remember the rules we spoke of earlier if you wish to date or make new friends on line. Be safe!!!

As with any culture even Christians have many different sub cultures as such. They all serve and believe in the same God but do it in different ways. Your choices when choosing to join a church can be confusing but you will find one that suits you best.

There are Catholic Churches, High Christian Churches, and The Church of England, Protestant Churches, Presbyterian Churches, the list goes on. But if you do a little research first maybe on the web or in your local library you will find the church for you! You may now see that it is possible to be Goth and have a religion at the same time without compromising who you are and how you look.

Some people go through life without giving religion even a second thought, where as others ponder and others are fascinated. Some do something about it and join a religion others just look from afar. It all comes down to you and your choices! I hope I have given you something to think about and that you may just look into something and give it a try!

Fashion

When it comes to fashion there are some do's and don'ts to adhere to:

DO's

- Wear anything black, white, navy blue, dark purple and deep red.
- Wear silver jewellery, skulls, bats and coffins are popular but not essential. Any jewellery is fine just as long as it is silver. This is of course unless you belong to group that is all about werewolves then silver is a very bad thing.
- Dye your hair either black, almost white blonde, red, or purple.
- Keep your makeup to two colours – Black and white. White face or pallor as some may call it and black eyeliner and lipstick. Some like to draw intricate lines/designs with the eyeliner on their faces.
- Pluck your eyebrows within an inch of their lives! Think thin, very thin or if you're feeling brave shave them off altogether and draw them in.
- Wear clothes that come under the following categories: Velvet – Wear this in every type, Bondage – PVC, rubber, latex and leather. Also corsets come under this heading among others, Ruffles – Shirts that are white only look ok with ruffles any other colour and it just looks plain silly!!
- Wear chokers. There are several different types of these and it is best to co-ordinate them to your dress.
- Opera style clothes are acceptable but only in capes and gloves.
- Do wear fishnet shirts and/or tights this coupled with lingerie on the outside of your clothing i.e. bustier is a must for the sexy Goth look.
- Anything with chains, spikes or studs is always a favourite.
- Tattoos and piercings, now this depends on you, how many and where if at all.
- Now I have noticed recently that the stripy white and black tights, pointed shoes and mad hair seem to be making a come back.

- Do wear the following shoes – High heels at least 5 inches, Doc Martens, shoes with buckles, chains, combat boots and pointy toes.
- Do go for a out of the normal hair style, back combing, extensions, interesting clips and hair pieces are all the rage.
- Do wear your favourite band's t-shirts and be proud to show off your taste in music by advertising them with stickers on your books, car, and bag, anything that you can sticker that is personal!
- Finally the ultimate must have a long leather trench coat/jacket. Some people like to have designs on the back others don't it's a personal choice.

DONT's

- Don't go for the same look everyone else has! Be an individual, that's why you became a Goth in the first place and not a sheep!! Everyone seems to copy one of a few movie characters or band members, Robert Smith, Eric Draven, Siouxsie Sioux, Andrew Eldritch and Death himself just to name a small few! BE DIFFERENT!!!
- Don't go over the top with your make up especially eyeliner it can look too over the top and just silly. The clown look is not the way to go!!
- Don't wear bright colours, pink and yellow are especially a no, no.
- Don't over do it on accessories, too much and you'll look like a walking shop or bag lady, not a good look!!
- Don't try and mix too many styles together you'll end up looking like you got dressed in the dark, are blind or just plain homeless.
- Don't end up looking like an extra from the Matrix, i.e. Black shades and a long latex jacket! It's so not cool or acceptable and is very out of fashion right now in our world.
- Don't go main stream when shopping. Places on the high street mostly are not for us but you do find the odd gem. Keep an eye out for them, we are growing in culture and shops are learning this slowly but at least they are finally catching on.
- Don't wear something you feel stupid in, just to fit in.

- Don't wear jeans unless their black!
- Don't wear your cloak unless it's for ornamental reasons, i.e. clubbing etc, wearing everyday is just silly.
- Don't buy a cheap cloak, invest in one that will last a long time, not only will it look classier but a plastic or cheap one will just make you look like an idiot or a wannabe.
- Don't neglect your leather items, you'll regret it!
- Don't go on full on Latex without checking you are not allergic first. This could be nasty and range from a horrible rash right up to A&E, anaphylactic shock which is deadly, so check first and be smart!

Goth Slang Explained

As in every culture there are a few or sometimes many different slang words used when referring to other members of their culture, group or even religion. I have put together a few slang terms used within the Goth community that I know of and a few I have only just recently heard. So the correctness of some may be a little out;

- 1st Generation & 2nd Generation: 1st Generation are Goths who welcomed the culture into their lives in the 1980's. this was when bands like The Damned, Bauhaus, Siouxsie and the Banshees, and Joy Division came onto the scene and created what was later to be know as Goth. 2nd Generation Goths came along in the 1990's when new Goth bands emerged on the scene. Bands like The Shroud, Rosetta Stone, Nosferatu and London After Midnight were a welcome sound after a dry spell from the late 1980's into the early 1990's.
- Baby bat: A term used in a derogative way when we refer to those people who wannabe Goths but are only familiar with the stereotypical idea of what a Goth is. They try to copy our fashion and make-up, making a complete hash of it! And listen to Goth bands that are popular. The most common people who are Baby Bats are younger kids who are going through a phase and trying to look different and stand out. Often it is a form of rebellion and they grow out of it.
- Batcave: This origionally was a club in Soho, London. In the early 1980's it began to create and evolve the Punks into the 1st generation of Goths. Alien Sex Fiend played there live. It was unfortunately closed down years later when Goth seemed to go out of fashion and the culture moved more underground. This terms now refers to Goth clubs some may say.

- Bondage babe/boy: These are both girls and boys alike who wear fetish clothing when in clubs. This includes latex, vinyl and rubber. This term is used mainly to refer to this type of Goth who prefers this type of fashion. It does not necessarily mean that they are into S&M, but it cannot be ruled out.
- Corporate Goth: This is a term used for a Goth who works a day job but is not afraid to mix their office wear with their Goth style giving their clothes a kind of twist!
- Cyber Goth: See Net.goth this is has the same meaning but is just a different term.
- Devil bunny: The term is used to describe people who think Satan is awesome but not all of them are Satan worshipers. The term originally comes from a song by My Life with the Thrill Kill Kult.
- Elder Goth: This is the same as 1st and 2nd Generation Goths. They are Goths who have been part of the culture since it began or are over the age of 40.
- Glam Goth: This is a sarcastic term used solely for the fans of bands and for the bands themselves who completely fit the stereotype of what a Goth is. They are overly cheesy and real Goth laugh at them for this!!
- Gothing Up: This is a slang term used to describe getting dressed in Goth attire, mainly before hitting the club.
- Kindergoth: This term is used to explain a newly “found” or “made” Goth who is young and impressionable. It can be used also by some as a nasty derogatory term like Baby Bat. But not everyone views it this way and in the main the term is used for referring to a young inexperienced Goth.
- Mansonite: This is a new term for me so bear with me if I don’t explain it quite right! Apparently this term is used for Marilyn Manson Fans. This is because there is so much controversy surrounding him, is he a Goth, isn’t he a Goth? When Goths or some

may say supposide Goths begin to dress like him, do their make-up like him etc, then this term is used. It can be used as a derogative term.

- **Mod and/or Waver:** This term refers to fans of modern or new wave music. The music is normally 1980's bands like Depeche Mode, The Cure, Echo and the Bunnymen and The Smiths. The list goes on.
- **Mopey Goths:** This is a term used for those Goths that have become very brooding whilst pondering the pain of existence. They take life and emotion very seriously and are often loners or people who have been hurt quite badly by someone and need someone to come along and remind them of the joys in their lives. Some of these Goths turn out to be EMO.
- **"more gothic than thou":** Now this is a phrase I have heard a lot. It is used sarcastically to someone who has a snobbish attitude, or to describe someone who takes themselves far too seriously.
- **Net.goth:** This is a term used for the new generation that is hooked 24/7 to their computers at home. They are well known to all internet Goth sites, news groups, discussion boards and all Goth communities in general.
- **Ninny:** This is the same as Mansonite, but for the band Nine Inch Nails. It is used as a nasty, derogative term for their fans.
- **"Oh so Gothic":** This term has two meanings, the first is to express something that is good and maybe even clever of you. Say for example you have all the albums of a certain band this phrase would then be used to express how Goth is was of you to do this. The second way this term can be used is in a sarcastic way for those people who take the imagery of being a Goth i.e. Fashion etc too seriously.

- Perky Goth: This term is used for Goths who like to dress in the Gothic style and listen to the music, but don't like the broody, gloomy attitude some Goths have i.e. Mopey Goths. Perky Goths definitely don't take themselves too seriously and rarely get moody or depressed.

They are fun loving and often mix styles together. They are also the ones in the clubs trying to lighten up the Mopey Goths and EMO's of the world covering them in moonlight and roses.

- Spooky kid: This slang term is relatively quite new on the scene. Spooky kids are fans of Marilyn Manson and Nine Inch Nails and are mainly very young or just coming into their teens. Mainstream society always mistake Spooky kids as Goths. This is insulting to us as because they are children they get up to all sorts and the Goth culture gets the blame for the stupid things they do. Spooky kids and Goths don't get on and avoid each other as much as possible.
- Uber Goth: This is the term used for the Goth who under every circumstance is always perfectly groomed and dressed. It can also be used in a sarcastic and nasty way to describe a Goth who appears to be constantly trying to always be better than everyone else in everyway. Very much like "Keeping up with the Jones's".
- Ultra Goth: Now this term definitely has several different meanings! The 1st being that their attitude and soul is who they are and not what they dress like i.e. people who are Goth on the inside but dress like "normal" people. The 2nd is for Goths who have been on the scene for a long time but are not 1st or 2nd Generation Goths, you could say they are 3rd Generation but it doesn't have seemed to have caught on! And the 3rd and final meaning of the term is meant for Goths who take their dress and appearance to the extreme.

- Weekender or Weekend Goth: This term is used for the people who fit into the mainstream of society during the week and become their true selves at the weekend when they have the time to relax away from work and prying eyes or it could be said that they are a type of chameleon, they adapt to what ever environment is around them and dress accordingly. Others see them as the same as Baby Bats.

Parents - What you need to know about your Goth child

When on hearing your child has decided to become a Goth, your first reaction may be to get angry as you may not fully understand what it means to be a Goth. Shouting and arguing won't solve anything if anything it will make the situation worse. The first thing I can say to you here is don't worry and keep calm. You have chosen to read this guide so are obviously showing an interest and by what you have read so far you will be able to see that Goth kids are not dark and Satanistic, in need of help or weird.

In fact it is quite the opposite as most young kids are experimenting and are into it for what they see as a cool look, or to copy their friends. They could just like the music, or find the clothes and/or mindset fascinating. So as a parent relax, Goth for young kids or teens is more often than not, is just a fashion statement, just a passing phase, or part of teenage rebellion.

However, as with any other group, there are some exceptions when it comes to behaviour. Most Goths have the distinctive qualities of being non-judgmental and not being prejudiced in anyway.

They are more open to exploring subjects that might be considered taboo within "normal" society. Take the time to listen with an open mind, to what your Goth kid or teenager has to say as you may find their thoughts and views very intriguing and enlightening. Be prepared to be surprised

As you have read there are so many different levels of Goth and such a wide culture and variety of people who are into the Goth lifestyle that for your child to be experimenting in this way is good. It shows that they are becoming little adults and expressing their

emotions in a safe way. People who are Goths are usually very highly intelligent, free thinking and creative.

You will find that they may have some questions about subjects like the church, family structures, the law and the government. Be honest with them but obviously discuss it with them in an age appropriate way, but do express and instill into them the good about these structures and how they affect lives if not adhered to.

If do you feel the need to punish them for being naughty when they do something wrong then punish them but make it clear that you are punishing them for their actions, not for trying to express themselves by being a Goth because they will say that you are doing this when you are not.

Now here are some pointers for you that may help calm you even further or /and help you to understand your child more;

- Remember your own childhood

Remember back to when you were a child, you must have at some point done something rebellious or followed what was considered 'cool' that your parents were unsure about or didn't approve of? Did you listen to music that made your parent's want to pull their hair out? And drove them up the wall? But you felt it was for a good reason and that they were just not "getting" you? What you need to think is did all this in your childhood stop you from growing up and becoming a good person with strong values and a kind heart? I can probably answer that for you, none of your rebellious behaviour which was perfectly normal, to your parents did you any harm to you as a person. It was just part of your learning curve into becoming an adult. There are probably things in your past you regret doing but doesn't everyone? All your child is doing what you did as a child and it is up to you whether you want to act and behave how your parents did to you or not. Do your best to empathize with them share stories and make it all "light" as it will help you both.

- How they dress and what music they listen to

You may be worried and concerned because your child is suddenly requesting for you to buy him/her clothes that are for you a bit “out there”. But this is just part of Goth culture. You have read in this guide that just because your child is dressing in black or listening to music you don't like or understand, it doesn't mean they are involved with devil worship, are depressed or suicidal, using drugs, or doing anything criminal or morally wrong.

The majority of Goths are good, upstanding people of the community. Jumping to conclusions will do nothing but alienate you from your child, so keep an open mind when they ask for the latest CD/DVD or the latest fashion item. If you have a daughter you may be concerned about the choice of clothes that she wants to wear. You may think that they are too revealing or sexually provocative.

What is socially acceptable in today's world changes from week to week and Goth dress stays the same. Some fashions do change and Goth boys and girls alike do sometimes follow the latest fashions. After reading this guide you will now know what fashions and options are open to Goths.

Try to give them clear ideas of what your standards of what is unacceptable. Also likewise give them clear reasons as to why you expect him/her to adhere to this.

Do compromise on some things, but try and make them on minor issues so that you can then get your own way on the major ones. Keep things age appropriate and don't move or compromise on that level at all, it is for their own safety after all!!

- Getting involved but respecting their space

When venturing into your child's lifestyle choice you need to ask their permission in a way. Show an interest, find out as much as you can (by reading this guide you have done this!) and then maybe mention some of your knowledge to them.

This will then start a conversation and then it allows you to start asking questions and get involved and interested in their Gothic lifestyle. When they invite their friends round try and get to know them. Ask them what bands they like, what types of clothes shops etc.

But don't come over too full on as this will just scare them and make them feel as if their space has been invaded. So try and keep it light and casual. Once you get to know them better you can begin to ask them why they have chosen to be a Goth and what new ideas they have experienced. At this point if you are brave or just plain curious then borrow a CD and listen to it. Not necessarily the actual music but the lyrics of the song, you will find them quite profound.

- Your child's moods

At times your child may seem moody and unapproachable. Don't jump the gun and presume they need help because they are depressed or even suicidal. Try and talk to him/her calmly and above all listen and don't judge. If they don't want to talk to you then don't push the situation as you will make it worse. Leave them alone and they will come to you when they are good and ready.

Teenagers have a lot to deal with and with all those hormones kicking about they are an emotional mess so give them space and all will be ok. You went through it which you may or may not remember. It is possible that your child may need some help and counselling. Keep an eye out for potential self harming because regardless of culture or religion etc. it can happen, so keep an eye out for the signs. This does not mean your child will do it, statistics state it is 1 in 15 that do it.

- Talking to your child about sex and drugs

As with any culture you may be concerned that your child may be getting involved in alcohol or drug use and may be having underage sex. Please don't think you are over reacting because this is a perfectly legitimate concern for you to have.

All cultures and subcultures do have within them in hiding in the corners, an active drug scene. It is also very easy to get a fake ID and get into pubs and clubs if you have the right look and cards. Depending on your child's friends they may or may not encourage this behaviour, or they may discourage this kind of behaviour.

Now there comes a time in every parent's life when they have to have "that" chat. By this I mean the chat about sex and drugs. Make sure you have got all the information available to you on the subjects provided by your local connect centre.

It's best to not make the situation any more uncomfortable than it already is. It's best just to slip it into a conversation after having a laugh about something. After you have talked your child through the do's and don'ts of safe sex and drugs don't suddenly start spying on them and rooting through their drawers to see if they are doing anything, as this is the biggest form of insult to your child and the trust between you that you have built up will be smashed to pieces.

So as much as you want to know, don't snoop, and trust your child, you have brought them up to have respect for themselves and others and have instilled good moral values. Remember the Goth community as a whole frown upon these things and do not permit it or allow it, they are very anti drugs.

So to conclude there is no way you can stop your children from expressing themselves and being a Goth. So it's best to tell them how you feel if you be understanding with them they will be understanding with you. Most teenagers and kids are just trying to fit in, and sometimes they fit in best with other people who aren't like everyone else. They could turn out to be Wicca, Pagan, EMO or Goth just to name a few.

This guide has been written by a Goth for Goths and for you parents who are worried about your children. I commend you for this as in today's society many parents don't care about their children, you obviously do! There should be more parents like you! I personally know people who were Goths when they were teenagers and all though they still like and follow the music they don't dress in Goth fashion.

They have all become very successful, law abiding and responsible adults so bear that in mind. If you child is an EMO then remember they are very emotional.

Criticisms and Controversy

In this section we are going to look at what the public has been shown about us in the press and how their opinions and views of our communities and of us as people have been shaped.

Gothic culture has raised public concerns because the media has published stories that have influenced society. The public now view Goths as malicious and violent. This is untrue and we all know that we are of a non violent nature. This is mainly because some people have said they are Goths and then committed atrocities. This has caused the general public to view the Goth scene as dangerous and they are now very weary when there is no need to be.

The situation has not been helped by high profile crimes that have occurred not only in England but in the US as well. There has been school shootings in the US committed by people claiming to be Goths and these crimes have put our world clearly into the public eye and under their scrutiny which means they have begun to invade our lives and communities.

The public's concern reached fever point when the Columbine High School massacre occurred. The two students who committed the atrocity were incorrectly labelled as Goths and this misrepresentation caused a widespread society lash out at the Goth community. It was later approx 5 months later, that the official investigators found out that the two students were not Goths and had no connections to our community in any way. But the damage was already done and in North America our community over there was persecuted, hunted down and blamed for the terrible crime committed as if each of them had had a part in the actual shooting.

It will take years to repair what it took 5 minutes to destroy.

Further up the country in Canada another shooting in a school again brought the Goth community into a bad light wrongly. The Dawson College shooting was committed by Kimveer Gill who killed one student and injured nineteen students. He had an online journal which he updated regularly at a web site called Vampire Freaks. In his profile and postings he labelled himself as a Goth who had a fascination and love for guns, although his postings made it quite clear he was not a Goth at all as his favourite music listings were all heavy metal.

Something no Goth would ever listen to. He was not part of our culture or communities other than his ranting on the web site. It was reported in the press that the Goth music culture was responsible for the atrocity. Yet again this brought our community and culture into the bright lights of the media.

When police raided Gill's home they found letters celebrating what Eric Harris and Dylan Kelbold, the two shooters, had done at the Columbine school. They also found CD's with titles that were in reference to shootings at schools which included music from Ozzy Osbourne.

Other CD's they found confirmed that he was not in fact a Goth but a heavy metal fan. Again the damage was already done and the Goth community in Canada will have to take a long time to be able to recover from this.

Another wrongly labelled Goth School shooting was the Red Lake High School massacre. Seven people were killed by Jeff Weise and was wrongly labelled a Goth because he wore a long black leather coat and listened to heavy metal.

He did have a blog on line but it was on a Neo-Nazi website. Again Goths do not listen to heavy metal and after the press had again destroyed the Goth community in that area they finally printed the truth. Not once though in all of these tragedies has the media apologised to the Goth communities dragged into this and were wrongly accused for these crimes!

The list goes on if you look into this further;

- Richardson family murders
- Scott Dyleski killing
- The West Memphis Three

A lot of these crimes don't get to the public eye on a national scale but the damage is done in the local towns and villages. Because of this public misunderstanding we now have to put up with ignorance to our culture, discrimination, intolerance and prejudice. We are at risk of assault and recently there has been an atrocity against our kind here in England.

The recent case of Sophie Lancaster, who was kicked and stamped to death, is a shocking case that has opened up the eyes of the English public to the flip side of Goth culture in the news. She was viciously attacked while trying to stop Brendan Harris and Ryan Herbert and another three youths, attacking her boyfriend, Robert Maltby. The youth's spontaneous actions were caused by the fact that the couple were Goths and dressed in Goth fashion. Robert Maltby survived after hospital treatment and Sophie's selfless act which turned the attention away from Robert to her.

Little did she know but her act of defense for her beloved would cost her, her life. May she rest in peace and Angels look after and care for her as she committed a selfless act.

Further to this there are other cases that have hit the headlines where members of our community have been badly hurt. In San Diego California, four Goths were attacked by two men. One of these men was a member of the Navy!! One of the Goths, Jim Howard had to go to hospital and have lifesaving surgery.

The culprits were caught and brought to justice! But they made it clear that the reason for this terrible crime was because of them being Goths and their culture choice. These types of crimes have now been accepted as hate crimes and the law is beginning to take them seriously.

As a culture we are always criticised by others weather it is for the way we dress, the way we look, and how we act but it is all based on misconceptions, always remember though that we don't poke fun at them or are violent or anything that they think we are and one day they will realise this and give us the respect we deserve! So always be true to yourself and our culture, being a Goth is a full lifestyle choice and it's one of the best choices I have ever made!!

Speak Again Some Time.

Summary from website: www.gothus.com

GOTH, I BECAME ONE AND IT CHANGED MY LIFE.

Even though I may have looked like everyone else on the outside, I knew that I wasn't the same on the inside!

Have you ever felt like you didn't belong? That's the way I always felt, especially during my early high school years. While other kids seemed to have no trouble making friends and fitting in, I always felt on the outside.

My interests were different to other people's, and the things I liked to do, the music I liked to listen to and the stuff I liked to talk about seemed to go way over their heads.

Even though I may have looked like everyone else on the outside, I knew that I wasn't the same. I felt like I was judged by other teenagers for being different. I always wished I could find friends who understood what I was going through.

One day I met a new girl at school. She was quiet, but I liked her right away. She always wore dark eye makeup, she listened to awesome music, and she had her tongue and eyebrow pierced. I found her fascinating and I immediately thought that I could be like her. I don't know why but I was drawn towards her style, her behaviour.

After making friends and getting to know her, she started telling me all about the Goth scene and subculture, and about how she had found her place by living the Goth lifestyle.

I started going with her to see bands and she introduced me to all of her Goth friends. I was fascinated by the Goth culture and it was as if a whole world opened up for me then! After a while, I slowly converted and became a Goth myself. This is when my life became so much better. After I embraced the Goth lifestyle, I finally felt like I belonged

somewhere. Suddenly I was surrounded by people who thought just like me, and who looked and felt just like I did.

I felt like I had stumbled across this amazing club that I had always secretly been a member of. All of a sudden, I had a bunch of friends that I could swap music with, hang out with and just be myself around. I think I was always a Goth deep down. That's what I feel like, anyway. My new friends just helped show it to me.

I know now that what was missing all those years was a true sense of belonging. Feeling alone is worse than almost anything. Now I am so glad that I have found the Goth scene. It has really changed my life by helping me to realize that there are others who also feel like I do. Becoming a Goth didn't just mean that I dyed my hair black and started wearing dark clothes; it also meant that I found a supportive bunch of friends and the feeling that I finally belonged somewhere.

Goth Scene And Subculture Living The Goth Lifestyle.

Basic Facts of Goth Subculture.

The goth subculture started during the early 1980s in the United Kingdom as a gothic rock scene. This goth fashion could be termed as an offshoot genre of the post-punk subculture. Even though several such subcultures surfaced during that period, the goth subculture had been the longest surviving among them and had managed to even diversify and spread to other countries.

The goth scene, with its cultural proclivities and imagery, had been influenced to a large extent by the Gothic literature of the nineteenth century. However, the horror films and the BDSM culture had also become a part of the goths to a certain degree.

The goths have similar tastes in music, fashion, and aesthetics, though it could not be said that all the individuals with the same preferences are also goths, since there is no particular definition of how to be a goth.

The music taste of goths includes several music styles. The dress styles consist of punk, Victorian, death rock, and androgynous, along with mixtures from Medieval and Renaissance attire also. Normally, the dress would be a combination of one or more of these styles but black attire is the most common, with matching special goth fashion hair and makeup.

It is generally believed that the original goths were a tribe from East Germany, who were instrumental in the fall of the Roman Empire. However, the word 'goth' became synonymous with 'uncultured' and 'barbarian' due to the Christianization of Europe and goths were branded as pagans. However, the goth scene got a revival in the late eighteenth century when Horace Walpole published 'The Castle of Otranto' as a gothic novel in 1764.

After that, goth was associated with horror, darkness, supernatural, and morbidity. The gothic trend started relating itself to ghosts, vampires, graveyards, abandoned castles and churches, cursed families, nightmares, and other such melodramatic plots.

History of the Modern Goth.

The modern goth could be said to have originated in the late 1970s, when certain post-punk bands were labeled as 'gothic'. The early 1980s, however, saw the emergence of the gothic rock as a separate subgenre and its followers assembled as a distinctive movement. The goth scene appears to have obtained its name when Steve Keaton wrote an article 'The face of Punk Gothique' in the British rock weekly magazine, Sounds, on February 21, 1981.

The prominent meeting of the emerging gothic subculture was the Batcave in the Soho District of London, which was opened in July 1982. The old-school goths were later described as 'batcavers'.

Even while these developments were going on in the United Kingdom, the goth scene in the United States was also finding its feet in the late 1970s and early 1980s, with the death rock branching off from the American punk music.

The early stages of the goth subculture growth in US was known as 'dark culture' or 'dark wave culture'. During the 1990s, there was a surge in adopting Victorian fashion as goth fashion, inspired by the gothic revival in the middle of the nineteenth century and combining the morbid features of the Victorian culture.

However, the present goth subculture is highly diversified, with the characteristics of each group varying widely. The tastes and preferences differ significantly from one group to another, though many of them prefer to call themselves as goths even now. The new groups like to join the goth subculture on their own terms, instead of sticking completely to the previous identifying features.

It had become quite difficult to characterize the precise boundaries of the definition of how to be a goth. In spite of all these developments, the goth subculture remains stronger than other subcultures.

The Foundation of Goth Music Bands.

One of the most important fundamental features of the goth subculture is the goth music bands. The goth bands tend to be broad in their approach to music, after having branched out of the punk culture.

The first bands that introduced the gothic rock and death rock music were quite a small group. Bauhaus, Siouxsie & the Banshees, The Birthday Party, Specimen, The Damned, Ausgang, 45 Grave, The Virgin Prunes, Southern Death Cult, Sex Gang Children, Alien Sex Fiend, Christian Death, and Kommunity FK were the most prominent among them. The names of the bands are indicative of the goth fashion and the goth subculture, with more association to morbid subjects like death and suffering.

The mid-1980s witnessed the proliferation of bands that embraced the goth scene and they became quite popular among the masses also. The Mission, The Bolshoi, The Sisters of Mercy, and Fields of the Nephilim led this resurgence. In the 1990s, the popularity of these gothic bands increased, while new bands like Beggars Banquet Records, 4AD Records, and Factory Records emerged in Europe. In the United States, the Cleopatra Records received immense response, along with Projekt Records, particularly from Los Angeles, Orange County in California, and New York.

Many nightclubs started featuring special 'gothic' nights. The Projekt Records brought a new music genre termed as 'ethereal wave', which is basically a subgenre of the 'dark wave' music.

The goth scene and goth fashion had been enhanced with new styles of music such as death rock, gothic rock, Gothability, industrial music, experimental, EBM, punk rock, synthpop, and shoegazing over the past decade. At present, the emphasis is on death rock and positive punk, dominated by industrial, aggrotech, and synthpop styles of music, which is the most popular among the goth clubs. The 'Drop Dead Festival' attracts thousands of goths from all over the world.

Influence of Goth Fashion and Movies.

The influence of goth novels along with the poetry and music of the goth subculture on the goth scene is quite significant. However, the goth fashion was expressed more vividly in the movies and television shows through horror stories.

The horror movies of the German Expressionist Cinema that appeared after the first World War was adopted by the films of the Universal Studios in the 1920s and 1930s. During the 1960s, the portrayal of Dracula by Bela Lugosi, and the male gothic image presented by the Byronic Hero, along with the TV series like the Munsters and the Addams Family were powerfully appealing.

The mystique, elegant menace of the Dracula presented by Lugosi became a cult of its own among goths as well as the general audience as a lesson on how to be a goth. This extraordinary influence is revealed by the first album of Bauhaus, 'Bela Lugosi's Dead', which was released in August 1979. This music is considered by many as the starting of the real goth scene in goth subculture. The goth fashion was further nurtured by the albums, 'Siouxsie Sioux' of Siouxsie & the Banshees and 'Dave Vanian' of The Damned.

The influence of Bram Stoker -- Dracula and other horror images on goth fashion was reflected in the goth scene through the adaptation of appropriate dresses and other props like swirling smoke, cobwebs, rubber bats, etc. Naturally, the goth subculture got further association with the themes on morbid, occult, and supernatural subjects, these forming the serious underlying element of how to be a goth.

The biggest influence in goth subculture was brought about by Anne Rice, who depicted the vampires in her works as entities struggling with tragic sexuality, loneliness, and eternity. Her works became highly popular during the eighties and the nineties as an integral part of goth subculture.

Ideology of Goths is not Violence but Tolerance.

Due to the association of the goth subculture with death, suffering, and morbidity, the most common perception among the masses about the goths is violence associated characteristics. However, this is not true. Even though the importance of the mood and the related aesthetic presentation are overwhelmingly related to the dark and mysterious in goth scene and goth fashion, goths are not violent people. They never support violence but advocate tolerance as the main feature or ideology of the goth subculture.

The main direction of goth subculture is not towards hatred and violence but towards identification, recognition, and grief over all personal and social evils that are normally ignored by the mainstream culture. The principle of how to be a goth is based on the above premises of understanding the evils and tolerance towards them.

This is the chief characteristics of the goths, which is best expressed by the goth music. If this fact were appreciated, then the goth scene would not be considered as something abhorring, which should be shunned.

Further, another special aspect pertaining to the goths is their basic nature of being apolitical. Since the goth subculture does not express itself through political messages or arguments supporting any kind of social activism, they differ considerably from the punk and the hippie movements. The rebellion function is very minimal and muted in goth scene.

The basic ideology of the goth subculture is its emphasis on individualism and creativity, a tendency towards intellectualism, a mild expression of cynicism, and a high tolerance for diversity. However, the most fundamental aspects of goths pertain to apolitical aesthetics and simple ethics, which is why the goth subculture still exists, while the other movements have slowly died out. The young people are attracted only by these aspects in spite of the negative impression of the general public about goth subculture.